



# Mayor Paul TenHaken

## CITY OF SIOUX FALLS

224 West Ninth Street • P.O. Box 7402 • Sioux Falls, SD • 57117-7402 • [www.sioxfalls.org](http://www.sioxfalls.org)  
605-367-8800 • 605-367-8490 FAX • 605-367-7039 TTY/Hearing Impaired

October 28, 2019

Thank you to Judge Sogn and the Court for allowing me to address you today. I would like to start by thanking the Minnehaha State's Attorney office for taking this case and seeing it through with professionalism and class. I also want to thank the Sioux Falls Police Department for the hard work they do every day to protect the people of Sioux Falls, including even mayors and city councilors.

When I first decided to run for Mayor of Sioux Falls, I expected members of the community would occasionally disagree with my comments, beliefs and policies. All elected and appointed public officials deal with this reality. Thankfully, we live in a nation that allows the freedom to express one's beliefs and challenge those in positions of power. Founding father and former President James Madison once said, "Our First Amendment freedoms give us the right to think what we like and say what we please. And if we the people are to govern ourselves, we *must* have these rights, even if they are misused by a minority."

The free exchange of ideas in Sioux Falls has helped shape our community. Through open and honest debate, innumerable decisions by the city leaders, county officials, businesses, nonprofits and residents have transformed Sioux Falls into a community full of opportunities. The common thread throughout these debates and discussions is respectful public discourse that sticks to the issues and topics at hand and not decay into personal attacks, threats or innuendos of violence.

It was clear to me that Mr. Bruce's disapproval of my leadership had crossed the line from a policy debate and delved into a pattern of threatening and harassing communication that included not just me, but my family. I am thankful that the investigators, the state's attorney office, and the jurors on this case reached the same conclusion.

It is my hope that Mr. Bruce will use this conviction as an opportunity to learn from his past transgressions and move forward as a citizen of the United States who may engage in the respectful exchange of ideas, accept differences of opinions, and no longer make overt or insinuated threats against me or anyone else.

Lastly, it is my sincere hope that this case does not dissuade anyone from contacting me because as the Mayor of Sioux Falls, I want to hear from the public. My door is always open to the public to discuss matters that are important to the City of Sioux Falls and its people. I look forward to these conversations.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul TenHaken", with a stylized, overlapping flourish at the end.

Paul TenHaken  
Mayor